

Nobody told them they were a credit to their race. Nobody refused to return their salutes. Nobody expected them to bear the daily humiliations while wearing the uniform of their country.

It was different for the men in this room. When America entered World War II, it might have been easy for them to do little for our country. After all, the country didn't do much for them. Even the Nazis asked why African American men would fight for a country that treated them so unfairly. Yet the Tuskegee Airmen were eager to join up.

You know, I'm interested in the story about a young man who was so worried that the Army might change its mind about allowing him to fly, that he drove immediately to the train station. He left his car, as well as \$1,000 worth of photography equipment. He never saw his car; he never saw his camera; but he became a flyer.

These men in our presence felt a special sense of urgency. They were fighting two wars: One was in Europe, and the other took place in the hearts and minds of our citizens. That's why we're here. The white commander of the Tuskegee airfield was once asked, with all seriousness, "How do African Americans fly?"—kind of reflecting the ignorance of the times, they said, "How do African Americans fly?" He said, "Oh, they fly just like everybody else flies—stick and rudder." [*Laughter*]

Soon, Americans in their kitchens and living rooms were reading the headlines. You probably didn't realize it at the time, but you were making headlines at home, headlines that spoke about daring pilots winning a common battle.

And little by little, every victory at war was translated to a victory here in the United States. And we're in the presence of men who are earning those victories, important victories, leaders who pierced the unquestioned prejudices of a different society. You gave African Americans a sense of pride and possibility.

You saw that pride and awe—I'm sure you remember—in the faces of young children who came up to you right after the war and tugged on your uniforms and said, "Mister, can you really fly an airplane?" Some of you

have been in Germany and Iraq, and you still see that sense of pride.

I appreciate your going. I appreciate the fact that one of our young soldiers today took pictures for a—of you for a scrapbook for his children. I appreciate the fact that one of our soldiers today said, "It is not often that you get a chance to meet the guys who have paved the path for you."

The Tuskegee Airmen helped win a war, and you helped change our Nation for the better. Yours is the story of the human spirit, and it ends like all great stories do—with wisdom and lessons and hope for tomorrow. And the medal that we confer today means that we're doing a small part to ensure that your story will be told and honored for generations to come.

And I would like to offer a gesture to help atone for all the unreturned salutes and unforgivable indignities. And so, on behalf of the Office I hold and a country that honors you, I salute you for the service to the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:23 p.m. at the Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to former Secretary of State Colin L. Powell. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Proclamation 8119—Cancer Control Month, 2007

March 29, 2007

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Cancer Control Month is an opportunity to educate all Americans about cancer, to raise awareness about treatments, and to renew our commitment to fighting this deadly disease.

Through developments in medical science, we continue to make advances in the prevention and treatment of cancer. Yet millions of our citizens continue to live with some form of this disease, and it remains the second leading cause of death in the United States. Individuals can reduce their risk of developing cancer by practicing healthy eating habits, exercising, limiting sun exposure,

avoiding tobacco, knowing their family history, and getting regular screenings from the doctor.

My Administration remains committed to the fight against cancer. In 2005, the National Cancer Institute and the National Human Genome Research Institute launched the Cancer Genome Atlas, a revolutionary research project to help scientists understand the genetic sources of cancer. The discoveries from this project have the potential to bring about rapid advances in cancer research. And last year the National Institutes of Health invested more than \$5 billion in cancer research.

We are making progress. Cancer related deaths have declined for 2 consecutive years. Thirty years ago, there were only 3 million cancer survivors, and today there are more than 10 million.

During Cancer Control Month, we remember those who have lost their lives to cancer. And we commend the determination, courage, and strength of cancer survivors. Our Nation is grateful for medical professionals, researchers, family members, and friends who support cancer patients. Their dedication to these individuals is a reflection of the true spirit of America. Our country will continue the fight against cancer until it is won.

In 1938, the Congress of the United States passed a joint resolution (52 Stat. 148; 36 U.S.C. 103) as amended, requesting the President to issue an annual proclamation declaring April as "Cancer Control Month."

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 2007 as Cancer Control Month. I encourage citizens, government agencies, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other interested groups to join in activities that will increase awareness about the steps Americans can take to prevent and control cancer.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United

States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:23 a.m., April 2, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 30, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on April 3.

Remarks During a Visit to Walter Reed Army Medical Center

March 30, 2007

Thank you. Please be seated. Thank you all for joining me. Every time I come to Walter Reed, my spirits are lifted. They're first lifted by the soldiers and marines who are recovering from some very tough wounds. I had the honor of pinning the Purple Heart on quite a few people today, and I am always impressed by their resolve and their commitment to the country. Every time I come to Walter Reed, I'm also impressed by the caregivers—the docs, the nurses, the people who spend many hours trying to heal those who have been wounded in service to our country.

The soldiers and marines stay here only for a few months, but the compassion they receive here stays with them for a lifetime. And so on behalf of a grateful nation, I do want to thank our docs and our nurses and caregivers for providing extraordinary health care to the people who wear the uniform. I know full well that the work you do is behind the scenes. In other words, you don't get a lot of glory for what you do, but you certainly do from the family members who first come here, and they see their loved one on a bed, wondering whether or not that person will ever walk again. And then, 6 months later, the body is returning, and the spirit is strong—the person is up and moving around. The family and the soldier is impressed by that care.

Americans must understand that the problems recently uncovered at Walter Reed were not the problems of medical care. The quality of care at this fantastic facility is great, and it needs to remain that way. Independent analysis have given extremely high marks for